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The third of a series of teacher education units on teaching the disadvantaged contains material specifically about the Negro student. Reviewed are the scope and significance of the problem of educating these students, with some brief remarks on their location. The factors which contribute to the cultural deprivation of Negroes are described--slavery, discrimination, the development of Negro subculture, particular features of the Negro family, the ghetto, and the Negro self concept. The concluding section discusses the aspects of the teacher's role which are specific to the education of the disadvantaged Negro student. The major points of the unit are briefly summarized, and questions for discussion and a bibliography are included. For other units in this series see also UD 005 366, UD 006 843, UD 006 842, UD 007 191, UD 006 841, and UD 005 472. (NH)

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Unit Three
December 1, 1966

The Culturally Disadvantaged Negro Student

ONE-YEAR

SCHOOLWIDE PROJECT

GRADES K-12

By Kenneth R. Johnson

UD 005 367

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Science Research Associates, Inc., 259 East Erie Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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TEACHING CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED PUPILS

(Grades K-12)

by

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UNIT III: The Culturally Disadvantaged Negro Student

(December 1, 1966)

Third of Eight-Unit Series Appearing First of Each Month
From October 1, 1966, Through May 1, 1967

UD 005 367

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PREFACE

One of the foremost challenges in American education today is that of educating the culturally disadvantaged pupils. To help them achieve in school, it is necessary for educators to understand them and their problems. This SRA extension service, Teaching Culturally Disadvantaged Pupils, for grades K to 12, is specifically designed to help teachers understand the culturally disadvantaged, to offer suggestions and techniques for teaching the culturally disadvantaged, to stimulate thought and promote discussion among teachers of the culturally disadvantaged, and to serve as a guide to the really valuable writing and research on the problem. For several years, SRA extension services have been used by thousands of educators as a framework and background resources for monthly in-service meetings, emphasizing study of problems related to classroom teaching.

This series, Teaching Culturally Disadvantaged Pupils, is being offered for the first time in 1966-67. Each monthly unit deals in a concise, nontechnical manner with one phase of the subject. While this extension service is primarily designed for use in in-service education meetings, its comprehensive coverage and many practical suggestions for regular classroom teaching can also be valuable for private study by individual educators.

The following units are included in this series for 1966-67:

UNIT ONE: The Culturally Disadvantaged Pupil--Part I (October)
UNIT TWO: The Culturally Disadvantaged Pupil--Part II (November)
UNIT THREE: The Culturally Disadvantaged Negro Student (December)
UNIT FOUR: Other Culturally Disadvantaged Groups (January)
UNIT FIVE: Teaching the Culturally Disadvantaged Student--Part I (February)
UNIT SIX: Teaching the Culturally Disadvantaged Student--Part II (March)
UNIT SEVEN: Improving Language Skills of the Culturally Disadvantaged (April)
UNIT EIGHT: Improving the Reading and Writing Skills of Culturally Disadvantaged Students (May)

The author of this series is Mr. Kenneth R. Johnson, Consultant, Division of Secondary Education, Los Angeles City School Districts, Los Angeles, California. For the past year he has specialized in the problem of educating the culturally disadvantaged, particularly the problems of teaching language and reading. He has conducted numerous institutes and lectures on the disadvantaged student at teacher workshops, conferences, and the colleges and universities in the Los Angeles area.

Born in a disadvantaged area of Chicago, the author worked in the post office for five years and served two years in the army before attending college at Wilson Junior College, Chicago Teachers College, and the University of Chicago (B.A., M.A.). He has done graduate work at San Jose State

College, and is currently enrolled in the doctoral program at the University of Southern California. All of his teaching experience has been in schools that had culturally disadvantaged populations.

We urge the school administrator or other educator receiving this extension service on Teaching Culturally Disadvantaged Pupils to assign to some one interested and competent person or committee in your school the responsibility for making the best use of each unit.

The booklets in this extension service will arrive about the first of each month, October through May. This issue contains Unit Three. We hope it will provide valuable help and practical information to those involved in education.

Dorothy Ericson
Project Editor

Paul T. Kosiak, Director
SRA Educational Services

December 1966

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UNIT THREE: THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED NEGRO STUDENT

PART I: INTRODUCTION

Emphasis of Unit Three

Several times in Units One and Two the heterogeneity of culturally disadvantaged students was pointed out. The heterogeneity of the disadvantaged population is illustrated by noting the blocks of ethnic groups that comprise this population. Because these ethnic groups have experienced different histories and have come from other cultures or have developed different subcultures, they are not disadvantaged in the same way. Thus, Units Three and Four will focus on various ethnic groups to help teachers understand some specific ways in which these groups are disadvantaged. Unit Three will focus exclusively on the problems of educating the culturally disadvantaged Negro student.

All that has been written about culturally disadvantaged students in Units One and Two applies to the culturally disadvantaged Negro student. In addition, there are some specific factors pertaining to disadvantaged Negroes that affect the efforts to educate them. Some of these specific factors will be discussed in Unit Three.

Again the following observation must be made: there are some basic changes that must occur in our society if the efforts of teachers are to completely alleviate effects of deprivation on Negro students (and all other culturally disadvantaged students). Until these basic changes occur, however, teachers must educate these students as best they can.

Perhaps education can be the initiator of the needed changes. That is, educating disadvantaged Negro students might cause some of the forces that keep them disadvantaged to be eliminated, because these forces will not affect an educated population as much. In other words, education can be the bootstraps Negroes (and other disadvantaged) groups can grab to begin pulling themselves up.

Right now, a big part of the Negro population is in desperate shape--socially, economically, educationally--even psychologically. Furthermore, the problem has existed over many many years. Every objective investigator who has taken a hard look at America--from De Toqueville to Myrdal--has attempted to divert some of the vast resources and energy of America to the solution of its "Negro problem." The desperate condition of the Negro

population has produced a desperate situation for our society: a disgruntled segment of the total population is a danger to the total population--we simply can't afford any group to be banded together by despair against the rest of society. Education is a balm to remove this despair.

Over fifty years ago Booker T. Washington stated that the white man could not keep the Negro in the gutter without getting in there himself. And recently James Baldwin stated that the condition of the Negro tells as much about the white man as it does about the Negro. The truth of both these observations depends on whether the Negro's condition has been purposely created and perpetuated--either through action or inaction. The lack of dignity of a minority erodes the dignity of the majority.

The purpose of Unit Three is not to discuss the whole problem of the Negro. Instead, the purpose of Unit Three is to examine those areas of the total problem that affect the efforts of teachers to educate culturally disadvantaged Negro students. Other purposes of Unit Three are to help teachers understand the unique case of culturally disadvantaged Negro students, improve the instruction of culturally disadvantaged Negro students, improve human relations, and appreciate the seriousness and urgency of the problem of educating culturally disadvantaged Negro students.

Scope and Significance of the Problem

Abraham Lincoln signed the emancipation proclamation over three hundred years ago; yet many Negroes are still locked in a kind of slavery. Approximately two-thirds of the Negro population is held in bondage by the snares of cultural deprivation--too many Negroes are enslaved by all the cycles of poverty that perpetuate social tragedy; and this is the tragedy of America. For example, Negroes as a group have a pathetically low educational level. Literacy among Negroes is a comparatively recent thing. Thus, many Negro children do not acquire positive attitudes of the value of education; they do not really see the benefits of education distributed throughout their subculture; and they do not develop a good understanding of the educational process. These Negro children grow up to pass on this tragic inheritance to their children, and the cycle is repeated. The cycle of economic poverty is another snare that enslaves Negroes. Negroes as a group are at the bottom of the income scale. Economic poverty has been the rule rather than the exception; it is traditional with many Negroes--and traditional economic poverty generates itself, ironically growing greater on less and less.

Negroes as a group lead in almost every area of social pathology--broken homes, illegitimacy, delinquency, crime, dropouts--name any social cesspool that pollutes the mainstream of American society and the waters are black with drowning Negroes. Furthermore, efforts to save Negroes from social drowning are handicapped by the pathology of racial prejudice. Thus, efforts to treat one sickness are impeded by another sickness. Both must be treated simultaneously. Racial prejudice helps to generate and accelerate the cycles of poverty in a peculiar way: prejudiced persons point to the results of prejudice to justify their prejudiced attitudes.

A civil war was needed to free Negroes from their former condition of slavery, and an effort just as massive is needed to free Negroes from their present condition of slavery. If the concern of America is not focused on the problems of culturally disadvantaged Negroes, their lives will continue to be controlled by the forces of deprivation. This is slavery, because individuals caught up by these forces are unable to control their own lives and destinies. At the same time, the concern of America must be focused on the problem of racial prejudice.

Strengthening the economic base of Negroes is probably the first of many actions that must be taken to free Negroes from the slavery of cultural deprivation. They will not be able to enjoy the benefits of our society even if all the repressive forces are eliminated until they are able to satisfy basic needs. This means that they need more money. It's that simple. Of course, this is true for all culturally disadvantaged groups. But the economic problems and subsequent needs of Negroes are acute because of the disproportionate share of the burden of economic deprivation that presses down upon them. This also means that Negroes are disproportionately culturally disadvantaged, because of the close relationship between economic deprivation and cultural deprivation.

In his book The Other America Michael Harrington estimates that there are 40 million Americans living in poverty.[1] The seriousness of the economic problem of Negroes is revealed when the number of Negroes who are living in poverty is contrasted with the total number of Americans living in poverty. There are about 22 million Negroes in the United States. The most commonly used criterion for poverty is a yearly income below $4000. Using this criterion, the number of Negroes living in poverty is somewhere between 60 and 70 percent of the total Negro population. Negroes, who are roughly 10 percent of the total population of the United States, are more than 25 percent of the total poverty population of the United States! These figures, pointing out the disproportionate share of Negroes who are living in poverty, should be the concern of America.

Racial prejudice and its product, social and cultural segregation, are historical causes of the plight of Negroes. These two forces have caused Negroes to be excluded from full participation in the dominant culture, often legally. In the South, emotions generated by race prejudice have been translated into laws to exclude the Negroes from the dominant culture; in the North, emotions generated by racial prejudice have been sublimated into subtle ways of excluding Negroes from the dominant culture. Regardless of the area of these emotions, the results have been equally effective: the statistical description of the Negro population for any index of deprivation reflects the effectiveness of exclusion. In this affluent society it is inconceivable for any one group of people to have become so bad off without detrimental external influences.

Many observers of the conditions of Negroes have pointed out that Negroes are not the only group that has been at the bottom of American society.

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[1]Michael Harrington, The Other America (Baltimore: Penguin Books, Inc., 1963), p. 9.

Usually it is pointed out that former disadvantaged groups started at the bottom of the social and economic ladder (where they joined Negroes), were segregated, but after a couple of generations became assimilated into American society (leaving Negroes where they had first joined them--at the bottom). These groups have been able to accomplish the process of assimilation because they lost their identity or their identity could not easily be discerned. Negroes have been prevented from assimilating because they have not been able to lose their identity. Their blackness has made them vivid visible targets for continued oppression, has stigmatized them, and has generated the emotion of racial prejudice that blocked assimilation.

Thus, the blackness of Negroes has made it very easy for them to be excluded. Their blackness must be recognized and dealt with when any of the problems pressing Negroes is scrutinized. This recognition of their blackness seems both ridiculous by its irrationality and relevant by its visibility and the reality of racial prejudice. It must be dealt with, because in their blackness the testimony of their former servitude is cast, and that is the root of all their problems.

In a way, all Negroes--all 22 million of them--are culturally disadvantaged. The definition of the term culturally disadvantaged presented in Unit One is: "anyone who can't participate in the dominant culture." Negroes are still prevented from full participation in the dominant culture solely because of race. Therefore, all are culturally disadvantaged regardless of education, income, life-style, value system, etc. All Negroes are not culturally disadvantaged to the degree that it handicaps their academic achievement, however. The concern here is for those Negroes whose cultural background prevents them from achieving in school.

The situation for middle-class Negroes is rapidly improving. In fact, middle-class Negroes have had the door to the dominant culture opened for them, and they are passing through the door to full participation with increasing ease. Their less fortunate black brothers are actually slipping farther behind. Thus, the gap separating culturally disadvantaged Negroes from middle-class Negroes and the dominant culture is actually widening.[1]

An attitude of concern and tolerance must be developed to help Negroes break free of the shackles of deprivation. In addition, education is one massive program that must be conducted to help Negroes break out of their contemporary slavery. There is nothing new in this suggestion: education has always been regarded as a latter-day Abraham Lincoln to free Negroes. Education is one of the surest means of helping Negroes--or any culturally disadvantaged people--participate in the dominant culture and derive the benefits that accrue from that participation. Negroes desperately want to be integrated into the dominant culture. Education can be their passport. Increasingly, the desperate desires of many Negroes to be integrated have resulted in senseless, violent knocks on the doors of the dominant culture.

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[1]Daniel Patrick Moniham, The Negro Family (Washington: U.S. Department of Labor).

"Employment, Income, and the Ordeal of the Negro Family," Daedalus: The Negro American--1, Fall, 1965, pp. 745-70.

Education, however, is a key to the doors of the dominant culture--one doesn't have to knock. A Negro may not be able to go to the center of the culture once he unlocks the door until racial prejudice is eliminated, but he can get in--and he can now get much closer to the center because things are getting better!

The riots that have flared up in the ghettos--the violent knocks on the door--are especially tragic because most of the participants have been young Negroes of school age--from elementary school age to high school age. Education, rather than senselessness or hopelessness, must guide the actions of these young Negroes. This is the challenge for the teachers of America's culturally disadvantaged Negroes.

The consistency and duration of the problem of culturally disadvantaged Negroes indicates that our society has not yet solved the most important force that perpetuates the problem. And the force that perpetuates the problem, the force that we have not yet dealt with, is simply man's inhumanity to his fellow man. When his fellow man is black, the force is labeled "racial prejudice."

Racial prejudice has to be reduced--significantly. If it isn't, it will keep Negroes always making a start to rise from the bottom.

The Location of Culturally Disadvantaged Negro Students

In the South, the majority of culturally disadvantaged Negro students are in rural areas; in the North, the majority of culturally disadvantaged Negro students are in cities. Furthermore, the disadvantaged Negro population in Northern cities is steadily being increased by the migration of Southern rural Negroes to Northern cities. The number of disadvantaged Negro students is increasing so rapidly in Northern cities that the problem of educating the culturally disadvantaged has become the problem of educating culturally disadvantaged Negro students. Already, Negro students are close to 50 percent of the public school population in many cities; in some cities, the Negro population in public schools exceeds 50 percent (Washington, Chicago, Baltimore, Philadelphia). Many of these Negroes are culturally disadvantaged. The problem of educating culturally disadvantaged Negro students is a problem for public schools, because 98 percent of all Negro students are in public schools.

The movement of Negroes from rural areas to urban areas is brought out clearly in population figures of the United States Bureau of Census: in 1900, 90 percent of the Negro population lived in the South, and 80 percent of the Negro population lived in rural areas; in 1960, 73 percent of the Negro population lived in urban areas. The increase in urban Negroes has been notable in the big cities of the North, and this is where the problem of educating culturally disadvantaged Negroes is acute. To complicate the problem, the larger the city, the greater the chances are that Negro students are in schools with all Negro populations. This further isolates Negro students

from contact with the dominant culture. In smaller cities, disadvantaged Negroes--especially at the secondary level--come into contact with students from the dominant culture. In the South, of course, segregation laws have kept the Negroes isolated and cut off from school contact with the dominant culture (desegregation court rulings have accomplished little in breaking this system).

Because of higher birthrates (Negro mothers have more children than white mothers) the problem of educating culturally disadvantaged Negroes will increase (unless, of course, swift and miraculous changes occur in the society to decrease the potential for deprivation of newborn Negro children). In the North, a higher birthrate and migration are sure to increase the disadvantaged Negro school population. Teachers more and more will be confronted with the task of educating culturally disadvantaged Negro students.

PART II: FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROBLEM OF EDUCATING CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED NEGRO STUDENTS

The purpose of this section is to discuss some of the factors that contribute to the cultural deprivation of Negroes, and to point out some of the implications these factors have when classroom teachers work with culturally disadvantaged Negro students. Of course, a full discussion of these factors is impossible within the framework of Unit Three. If classroom teachers are to work more effectively with disadvantaged Negro students, however, they must recognize some of the educational implications growing out of these factors--historical and other factors.

Slavery

The former slave status of Negroes explains a great deal about their present conditions. The roots of almost any area in which Negroes are disadvantaged--economic, family structure, self-concept, assimilation, value system, morality, etc.--can be traced back to slavery.

The cruelty of the American system of slavery is unequaled. Any system of slavery is cruel; but the American system was particularly cruel because it did not recognize or treat Negroes as human beings. Instead, the American system of slavery considered Negroes as property--objects, things, tools for labor. The apologists for slavery often point to the warm relationship that developed between slaves and their masters to explain away some of the cruelty of the system. This kind of relationship was not the rule, however. Anyway, one can treat objects, things, and tools with care, even affection, especially if they have an economic value. In general, the relationship between slave and master did not conform to the romanticized version of the apologists for the system. Regardless of the relationship, Negroes were pieces of property and they have never forgotten this fact.

The system of slavery was not a strong foundation on which to build the means for acculturation. The opposite is the case: slavery prevented Negroes from developing a way of life that could be fused with the dominant culture when they were freed. In fact, the state of freedom immediately after the Civil War, during Reconstruction, probably increased the gap between the way of life developed during slavery and the dominant culture: Negroes were never prepared for the sudden freedom that victory by the Union forces gave them. They were turned loose in a society, ill-prepared by their former slavery to become assimilated, and they were marked as persons who were unacceptable for assimilation by the stigma of color.

Negroes were first imported as slaves into this country in 1619 and they were emancipated in 1863. Thus, they spent almost ten generations as slaves--pieces of property. This is more than twice the length of time they have been free--human beings.

When discussing slavery with Negro students, one fact needs to be brought out, because it is a source of pride and elevating self-concept for all Negroes: it took a very strong people, indeed, to make the advances Negroes have made in so short a time despite former servitude and continuing repression. Another suggestion classroom teachers of disadvantaged Negro students should follow when discussing or reading about slavery is that slavery should always be dealt with objectively and truthfully. If teachers or textbooks attempt to romanticize slavery, and play down the cruel reality of slavery (as is often done), Negro students tend to become cynical. Teachers should always be truthful about slavery. Most Negro students know the truth about slavery anyway. They check the teacher's honesty and integrity, however, during any discussion of the topic. And the teacher who is not truthful or objective on this topic makes Negro students suspect that the teacher is dishonest or lacks integrity on other topics. This means that teachers must often "fill in" the gaps in textbooks. Many textbooks do not handle slavery objectively, and Negro students who read these textbooks (or any textbooks on slavery) read them <u>very</u> carefully. On the other hand, the "drum and tambourine" approach when dealing with slavery will lose Negro students too. Be objective, but sympathetic; be truthful, but not overenthusiastic.

Probably the two most important things for classroom teachers to remember when dealing with the topic of slavery is to build self-concept by capitalizing on the gains Negroes have made since emancipation (always pointing out that these gains were made in spite of barriers) and to utilize the topic of slavery to shed understanding on the present conditions of Negroes in America. It is really more important that Negroes understand the roots of their deprivation better than individuals of the dominant culture, because out of self-understanding grows self-help. And this is something Negroes desperately need.

<u>Discrimination</u>

Discrimination was built into the system of slavery. After Negroes were freed, however, new means to impose discrimination were developed. In the South a system of legal discrimination was developed; in the North a system of subtle, "sub-legal" discrimination, equally as effective as discrimination in the South, was developed. Both systems were a <u>conscious</u> effort to exclude Negroes from full participation in the dominant culture.

Discrimination through the years has particularly hurt Negroes in income, in housing, and in education. No one is more aware of the debilitating and destructive consequences than the victims of discrimination, the Negroes. The most obvious examples of the system of discrimination for many Negro students are the schools they attend. Legal discrimination or segregated housing patterns have created many many Negro schools. This fact

should not be confused with arguments for integrated schools. Integrated schools may or may not be good--this isn't the point. All Negro schools reflect the system of discrimination that has operated against Negroes, shutting them off from the dominant culture--and this is the point.

Discrimination (and the whole Negro problem) is the most discussed topic in the Negro subculture. There is no other topic that receives even half the attention that this topic receives. Yet, schools have either tended to remain aloof from this topic, or they have tried to remain neutral. The so-called Negro revolution makes it impossible for schools to continue this historical stance on discrimination. The desire of Negroes to remove discriminatory barriers are currently translated into direct assaults on these barriers, and the schools can't evade the responsibility of helping Negroes direct their action in democratic lawful ways. The senseless, riotous actions of many Negroes, to remove the barriers of discrimination indicate that they have rejected many of the democratic processes the schools are supposed to have taught them. Admittedly, many young Negroes have been urged to senseless actions by irresponsible leadership. But this is only further evidence that the schools did not give many young Negroes the direction they needed. Now, the schools can't really be blamed entirely for this--the frustrations of deprivation and the pent-up hostility resulting from discrimination could produce senseless action in spite of any efforts of the school. Also, the handicaps to learning produced by a disadvantaged background could prevent these Negro students from learning democratic processes just as many of them have been prevented from learning to read. But the intense motivation of Negroes to remove barriers of discrimination causes one to wonder if the schools could have channeled the energy produced by this motivation into positive learning.

It may seem as if this whole topic of discrimination is irrelevant to the teacher-student relationship and the classroom situation. If teachers realize that this is the most important concern of Negroes, the relevancy of the topic is unquestioned. Teachers can't ignore the topic. This does not mean that teachers should constantly discuss the topic in the classroom. Teachers must realize, however, that Negro students, even very young ones, look for both evidences and oversights of discrimination in the learning situation at all times. For example, during the pledge of allegiance to the flag, Negro students think about the phrase " . . . liberty and justice for all"; in social studies, the words equality and democracy, or the omission of the Negro's role in American history have a special meaning for Negro students; and the dominant white culture portrayed in reading textbooks is contrasted with their situation. All such examples carry special meaning to Negro students.

What should the classroom teacher do? Is it necessary to stop at each example that hints at the problem of discrimination and point it out? Of course not. Classroom teachers who work with Negro students should, however, discuss the problem objectively whenever an apparent conflict between democratic principles and the reality of discrimination occurs in subjects or textbooks.

The topic of discrimination should be treated objectively also. In addition, this negative topic can be used in a positive way, somewhat like the

topic of slavery. First, Negro students can be shown how other Negroes have surmounted discrimination barriers. This has a rising effect on self-concept and aspiration level. Secondly, an understanding of the system of discrimination helps Negro students understand their society instead of just suffering their condition. Understanding leads to effective ways of removing discriminating barriers. Finally, pointing out to Negro students that these barriers can be surmounted strengthens, rather than weakens, faith in democracy. It is incredible that the United States, in its Voice of America broadcasts to foreign nations, deals with the problem of discrimination objectively to sell democracy; yet America's schools, and particularly textbooks, handle the topic gingerly or not at all when trying to sell democracy to its own citizens!

Throughout this discussion on discrimination, the words culturally disadvantaged Negro students have been interchanged with the words Negro students. The reason is obvious: all Negroes are affected by discrimination. Years of discrimination have intensified the feeling of rejection of Negroes. The more they have been affected by discrimination, the greater their feelings of rejection. Thus, many Negroes are alienated.

Feelings of rejection and alienation breed negative self-concept, hostility and despondency. Many Negroes feel so alienated from the dominant culture that they have given up ever being integrated into the dominant culture. Thus, so-called black nationalist groups have developed that advocate, ironically, the same philosophy that produced their alienation. Some of these groups, especially in the big city ghettos, are dangerously active among Negro youths. This presents another challenge to the schools. The actions of these black nationalist groups must be counteracted. The schools spend a great deal of time, especially at the secondary level, insulating young people from the appeals of communism. The threat of communism isn't nearly as immediate as the threat of some of the black nationalist groups. Negro youths must be shown that their future is in correcting inequities in our democracy and not in rejecting our democracy. Rejection of democracy can result only in greater tragedy for Negroes.

Slavery and discrimination are historical twins that have alienated Negroes from the dominant culture, making it difficult for many of them to achieve successfully in the school curriculum. Some of the specific characteristics of culturally disadvantaged Negro students produced by the subculture Negroes have developed will be discussed below, and the implications these characteristics have for education will be pointed out.

Development of the Negro Subculture

In Unit Two the general characteristics of culturally disadvantaged students were pointed out. Perhaps this is a good time to go back to Unit Two and review these general characteristics, because culturally disadvantaged Negro students are described by these general characteristics. This point must be emphasized. Their particular history of slavery, continued discrimination and alienation, however, have caused them to give their own

peculiar ethnic twist to some of these characteristics, acquire other characteristics, and be affected by other factors that have implications for education.

Individuals are products of their culture. They learn the particular way of life of the group into which they are born. Sometimes this group is a relatively distinct but not a totally separate part of a larger whole--in other words, a subculture. This is the case of Negroes. The system of discrimination and segregation that has operated against them so long has caused them to develop a way of life--a subculture--that differs from the dominant culture. The subculture Negroes have developed is their way of coping with life. Patterns of behavior, institutions, attitudes, and values passing from the dominant culture into the Negro subculture must first be passed through the prism of the historical experiences of Negroes, and in this process these patterns of behavior, institutions, attitudes, and values are refracted and bent to fit their particular needs. Thus, the subculture Negroes have developed is a result of the conditions of life set by the dominant culture, the freedom the dominant culture allows Negroes, and the historical experiences of Negroes.

Indications that Negroes have a subculture are illustrated in many ways: family life, child-rearing practices, religious practices, food, language, music, humor, etc. Furthermore, the products of the subculture, the Negro students, acquire certain characteristics that may or may not handicap them when they enter school. Some of those characteristics that limit the school achievement of many Negroes will now be discussed. Again, Negro has been substituted for culturally disadvantaged Negroes because what was stated applies to the whole group. The inadequacy of the term culturally disadvantaged is clear when discussing Negroes. The really culturally disadvantaged Negro students in the context of the present concept of cultural deprivation are those students severely handicapped by their cultural background.

The Culturally Disadvantaged Negro Family

Any discussion on culturally disadvantaged Negro students must include the culturally disadvantaged Negro family. Children are products of their culture; but, more importantly, children are products of their families. The family is the basic social unit of American life, the crucible in which socialization is forged. The basic tenents of the culture are transmitted by families to children. The school gives depth and dimension to the transmission. But if the family has been ineffective in transmitting basic tenents of the culture, or if the basic tenents of the culture, or if the basic tenents transmitted are different from the expectations of the curriculum, then children from these families have extreme difficulty in achieving in school. Many culturally disadvantaged Negro students come from families that have not met the expectations of the curriculum. In addition, many Negro families are suffering from economic and social handicaps that also affect the school achievement of children from these families. The degree of deprivation of many Negro students can be measured by the conditions of their families.

Many Negro families are in bad shape. The deplorable condition of the family in the Negro subculture is shown in every index of family breakdown, such as divorce, desertion, separation, female headed families, illegitimacy, aid to dependent children and indigent families. The situation is so bad that the Negro family has become a serious concern of the federal government. Many of the programs in the war on poverty are indirectly designed to strengthen the Negro family. The United States Department of Labor publication, The Negro Family, has as its subtitle, "The Case for National Action," and this subtitle implies the serious concern of the federal government.[1] All the figures pertaining to the Negro family quoted herein are taken from this publication.

Thomas Jefferson stated that government should help people when they cannot help themselves. Thus, the inference of the federal government's concern and increasing efforts to solve the breakdown of many Negro families is that many Negro families cannot help themselves. It is shameful that Thomas Jefferson's statement applies to an area so basic as the structure and state of the American family. The breakdown of many Negro families is covered by two words: matriarchal and economic. Again, the roots of these two trouble stems were planted in slavery, and they have been cultivated through the years by discrimination. Now America has a bitter harvest.

Many Negro families have been forced into a matriarchal structure. This kind of family structure is so far out of touch with the family structure of the dominant culture that it tends to severely retard the progress of the whole group. The structure particularly crushes and erodes the self-concept of Negro men and boys, and imposes a heavy burden on Negro women--they have had to be both mothers and fathers, providers and caretakers, in too many cases.

The system of slavery did not support the institution of the family as a unit, because Negroes were not thought of in human terms. Slave owners were forced to think of Negroes as subhumans because of the conflict between the system of slavery and Christianity. The Christian religious framework could not contain both slavery, as practiced by the South, and the concept of brotherly love. Thus, Negroes were treated more like animals than humans, and the dignity of both the master and the slave was destroyed.

Negro families were divided when it was to the economic advantage of the slave owner. Negroes were sold like cattle and the concept of the family as a unit was destroyed in the process. In many cases, however, children were too young to be separated from their mothers. The breakup of the family meant that the father went to one buyer, the mother and children went to another buyer. If the family was lucky, one buyer would purchase them all--but this was not a primary concern of the buyer. Thus, the natural dependency of young children on their mothers helped to develop the pattern of mothers as family heads.

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[1]Office of Policy Planning and Research, The Negro Family (Washington: U.S. Department of Labor, 1965).

Slaves did not develop strong marriage ties on the plantations, nor were strong marriage ties supported by the attitude slave owners had toward slaves. Children born of these loose unions were looked upon as being the mother's responsibility rather than the father's. This was a natural result of the inability of the father to be a provider for the family in a normal sense, and the fact that the children didn't belong to either the mother or the father--they were the property of the slave owner. Again, dependency made the mother responsible for the care of the children, and because of this, the "head" of the family. Often fathers lived on other plantations, and the distance between plantations and the difficulty of visiting weakened family ties and prevented normal family structure from developing. Another factor that forced the Negro female to be the head of the family was the result of unions between master and slave. Many children were born of these unions, and they always remained with the mother.

The matriarchal structure of the Negro family developed in slavery because of the mother's fundamental role in relation to the child. The structure did not change after the Negroes were freed, and subsequent social and economic factors perpetuated it.

The other force that has had a debilitating effect on the structure of the Negro family is economic poverty. Between 60 and 70 percent of Negro families have incomes of less than $4000, which is the level of poverty (only 26 percent of white families have incomes below this figure). It is difficult for families with such a meager income to adhere to the life-style of the average family of the dominant culture. Furthermore, economic poverty breaks down family structure; since Negroes are disproportionately affected by economic poverty more than any other ethnic group, the structure of many Negro families has been affected. For example, in 1964, 29 percent of Negro males were unemployed at one time or another.[1] As unemployment goes up, family breakdown rises. Unemployment has an interesting effect on perpetuating the matriarchal structure and breakdown of Negro families: when the male head becomes unemployed, the family passes through several stages toward breakdown. The family becomes broke, then it exhausts its credit. At this point females take over: first the social worker (usually a female), then the wife who administers the welfare funds for the upkeep of the home. The husband really isn't needed, at this point, for the survival of the family. This process destroys his self-concept; in addition, intermittent unemployment makes the steady income of welfare attractive for the wife and children and many Negro husbands are put out or they "cut out."

Another economic factor that tends to break up family structure and perpetuate the matriarchy is the advantage Negro women have over Negro men in obtaining employment. Historically, Negro women have held this advantage; they have even held the advantage of moving into higher paying jobs or jobs with higher status. Perhaps this explains the significantly greater academic achievement of Negro women over Negro men: they could see a real need for education. Presently, about 60 percent of Negro women are in the work force. The relative ease of Negro women to find employment has tended to

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[1] Ibid., p. 6.

make them economically independent of Negro males, and family breakup is often the result of this independence. Again the self-concept of Negro males suffers because of this; but the real sufferers are the children, and the door keys hanging around the necks of many Negro children of working mothers is the albatross symbolic of all the destructive forces pressing down on the Negro subculture.

These destructive forces, rooted in slavery and perpetuated by discrimination, have caused the Negro to develop a subculture that contains within it a majority of families classified as culturally disadvantaged. Furthermore, these forces have caused many Negro families to break up. It is estimated that 25 percent of all Negro families are headed by a female. The figure is higher for urban families than for rural families. Another grim statistic contained within the figure given for families headed by Negro females is that almost 25 percent of Negro births are illegitimate. The immorality represented by this figure cannot be mentioned without also pointing to the immorality of a society that has imposed the conditions on a group in which illegitimacy is only one of many debasing manifestations.

Thus, the condition of many Negro families is truly "a case for national action." It must be stressed that certainly not all Negro families, and not even all culturally disadvantaged Negro families fit the description outlined above. Enough children attending schools, however, come from such families (either fitting the description or leaning toward the description) to create a problem.

Understanding family breakdown carries specific implications for educating many culturally disadvantaged Negro students. In the first place, the kind of families described in textbooks may tend to confuse many culturally disadvantaged Negro students, particularly the younger ones. Older culturally disadvantaged Negro students know the normal structure of the American family in the dominant culture--they also are aware of the deplorable structure of many disadvantaged Negro families. Still, classroom teachers can't allow young disadvantaged Negro students to remain confused about family structure. Teachers are obligated to support the value of the family as a stable unit, with all its essential components: children, mother, and father. The best approach to take with very young students seems to be not to contrast family structures, but to deal with each family presented in the text as individual families--that is, teachers should not generalize that most families fit the structure of a family presented in the text. In the later primary grades and the middle grades, this kind of generalization should be made without negatively rejecting other structures. This generalization can be made too early for many disadvantaged students because of the expectations of the curriculum. In the later grades, stories depicting families with a female head should be given to students to show them that there is room in the curriculum for all. In this case, the family structure should not be romanticized, as stories of this kind usually are in texts; instead, treat the family in this kind of story as an individual instance--the same way family structure is treated in the early primary grades with very young disadvantaged children. Admittedly, the whole problem of conflicting family structures of many disadvantaged children and textbook families is a delicate one. Perhaps the best advice that can be given teachers is to use common sense that grows out of understanding the children they work with.

The discrepancy between the valued family structure of the dominant culture and the family structure of many culturally disadvantaged Negro students should be dealt with objectively when working with older secondary students. The discrepancies should be pointed out and the reasons for their existence should be examined. Again, it is recommended that these students be given self-understanding to develop self-help. These students must learn the values of the dominant culture if they are going to enter the dominant culture. These older students are aware of family breakdown as an effect in the Negro subculture; they are not aware of the cause. The schools should connect the relationship and clear up some of the confusion these older students have on family structure. It is ironic that basic facts of family structure are presented and dealt with more in the curriculum and texts in the primary grades, when many Negro disadvantaged students are least able to understand the discrepancies, and dealt with less in the high school, when these students can and should understand the discrepancies. When the American family is studied at the secondary level, the topics studied are usually not the basic structure of the family and the forces of destruction attacking this basic structure. Instead, topics like family budgets, importance of selecting a good mate, etc., are covered. All students should study these topics. In addition, many culturally disadvantaged Negro students in high school need a strong course in sociology that includes, among other things, a thorough study of basic family structure, the advantages of this structure in our society, and the causes of family breakdown. Perhaps this approach would positively contribute to the "national action" that is needed, according to the federal government.

The absence of a male head in many Negro families has a particularly debilitating effect on boys. Too many Negro boys grow up in families without a male model, and they attend schools dominated by females (particularly in the elementary grades). They learn their male roles the best way they can; often they learn the male role in the streets from their immature peers or the adult models found in the streets. The immaturity of these boys causes them to select as models the adults who occupy exciting, "flashy," and money-making roles. In the ghetto, this means that Negro boys often take the hustler, the "tough," the pimp, and other undesirable residue of human waste expended from these sores of urban neglect. These shady models are esteemed in the ghetto--they are the ones who have money, dress sharp, drive the Cadillacs--they have become topsy-turvy successes out of social neglect and breakdown. They are looked up to, romanticized in Negro songs and folktales ("Frankie and Johnny," "Stagger Lee"), and they are often objects of women's affection. Thus, they present attractive models to many disadvantaged Negro boys in the ghetto.

The problem of the lack of a male family head is just as serious in small towns and rural areas. Lacking shady characters as models, many disadvantaged Negro boys in these areas learn their male roles at their mothers' knees. This is no place for a boy to learn how to be a man. There is an ethnic joke that the first thing a Negro mother teaches her daughter is that a Negro man "ain't no good." If there is any truth in this joke (not the content but the telling of the joke!) then the ability of a mother to teach a boy the male role can be questioned. Women have no business teaching boys how to be men, anyway.

One place disadvantaged Negro boys should be able to find male models is at school. Unfortunately, women dominate elementary schools and make up almost half of the personnel in secondary schools. The problem is acute at elementary school because of the lack of male teachers and the formative age of the students. More men are entering elementary teaching, but not enough. Almost every elementary school, however, has at least one male teacher. This one male teacher can be used effectively as a model, with a little flexible scheduling: he can exchange places with women teachers--especially in the primary grades--for part of the day. Perhaps in elementary schools located in Negro ghettos a "floating" male teacher can be assigned a regular schedule to teach part of the day in rooms taught by female teachers. Of course, the subject taught should be a "masculine" subject, like physical education, science, math, or industrial arts.

The Ghetto

Ghetto life has a greater influence on Negro students than just providing poor models for the boys. The black ghettos of American cities conform to the negative environment of the culturally disadvantaged described in Unit Two, and all the inhibiting power of such a negative environment are wielded by the ghettos against its young people. In fact, America's black ghettos are the worst kind of negative environment. In every city the black ghettos lead in crime, disease, family breakdown, substandard housing, and most other social disruptions. Being raised in such an environment in itself handicaps a student, because no one living in the ghetto can escape being scarred by it. One tragedy of Negroes in American cities is that most of them are locked behind the invisible walls of the ghettos.

Originally the word ghetto was the name of the Jewish section of sixteenth century Venice. Now the word has come to stand for the areas in cities where Negroes live. Few Negroes in America's cities are able to live outside the ghettos, because there are forces present in the cities to restrict all Negroes to the ghettos. Economic level is not the qualification for living in the ghettos--black skin is the only qualification. Thus, the ghettos can present an interesting contrast if one looks hard enough: good and bad, religion and immorality, middle class and lower class, wealth and poverty, joy and sorrow--all the opposites one can think of are nowhere else in such incongruous juxtaposition. This is why many Negro students are usually more worldly wise than students of other groups.

The ghetto was described above as being surrounded by invisible walls. The limiting effect these walls have on Negro students is that they prevent these students from coming into direct contact with the "outside world"--the dominant culture. Many young Negroes have never been outside these walls, and the world presented in the textbooks is not only populated with strangers, but it is unfamiliar in its physical appearance. Since these walls keep Negroes locked in and untouched by the dominant culture, the "ghetto subculture" perpetuates itself. In fact, unlike most ghettos of other ethnic groups in the past, the Negro ghettos are expanding both in size and density of population. The ghetto situation is getting worse! And it's getting worse because the stigma of black skin causes all Negroes to be unacceptable neighbors to many others in the dominant culture.

Self-concept

Self-concept has been defined as "an individual's assessment of himself"; the assessment is made by comparing himself with others, or having himself compared to others.

Some of the causes of negative self-concept of culturally disadvantaged students were discussed in Unit Two. All of these causes apply to culturally disadvantaged Negro students. In addition, there are some contributing causes for negative self-concept that stem from the peculiar status of Negroes in America. The inability of some Negro men to fill the male role as family head has been pointed out as an eroding factor on self-concept; also, the historical fact of being former slaves and continuing as victims of discrimination are obvious causes that contribute to the negative self-concept of culturally disadvantaged Negroes. There are two other important causes for negative self-concept peculiar to Negroes: the stereotype that the dominant culture has held up as a model of Negroes, and the stigma of black skin (which encompasses the other stigmata of kinky hair, thick lips, broad nose, or any other physical feature identifiable as Negro).

Some Negro writers, including James Baldwin, Richard Wright, and Ralph Ellison, have stated or implied that the Negro was invented by the white man. What these writers are referring to is the stereotyped image of the Negro that has developed. This stereotype projects Negroes as good-for-nothing, shiftless, immoral, inferior, simple children of nature who are inclined to steal, rape, kill--yet they are also loyal, obedient, and know their "place" and keep it (except when some "outsider" stirs them up). This image of Negroes is inconsistent and contradictory; yet this is the stereotype that the dominant culture historically had of Negroes. Fortunately, our society is maturing and this stereotype is fading. Its influence, however, is still active on the self-concept of Negroes--a kind of dark shadow extending out of our historical immaturity that dims the self-concept of present-day Negroes. This stereotype has a negative influence on the self-concept of Negroes because it taught Negroes who they were and what they were--and, if they did not accept this, it taught them what they were expected to be.

There is always some truth in a stereotype. For example, the stereotype of happy-go-lucky Negroes seems to hold a great deal of truth. Culturally disadvantaged Negro students are surprisingly happy and cheerful, in spite of the adversity surrounding them. Most Negro students learn from their culture not to take troubles too seriously because there is little they can do to control the powerful forces of our society that are the causes of their biggest troubles. The peculiar thing about stereotyping is that it tends to prove itself. In the case of the Negro, the society created conditions and forced Negroes into these conditions in which the qualities fitting the stereotype could develop. When these qualities did develop, they were reinforcement for the stereotype. In addition, the process of "self-fulfilling prophecy" tends to cause some individuals to conform to the stereotype. That is, an individual ". . . belonging to an oppressed and exploited minority, which is aware of the dominant cultural ideals but prevented from emulating

them, is apt to fuse the negative images held up to him by the dominant majority with its own negative identity."[1]

Adherence to the stereotype, then, also reinforces the victims' negative self-concept formed through relative assessment. Thus, the label given to Negroes has helped to influence the development of a negative self-concept in two ways: first, many Negroes tended to conform to the label (the stereotype) by the process of "self-fulfilling prophecy" and this provided a frame of reference for relative assessment; secondly, even if Negroes did not conform to the label in actions, their self-concept was damaged because they were told over and over again that this is what was expected of them.

The curriculum has contributed its share in upholding a negative image of Negroes. There are examples in literature and music, such as "The Gold Bug," "Black Sambo," Huckleberry Finn, Robinson Crusoe, "Old Black Joe," "Swanee River," etc., in which Negro characters are portrayed negatively or the Negro race is referred to in negative terms. In addition, the omission or slight attention given to the role of the Negro in the development of our country's history is a kind of negative "silent comment." Such examples as these in the curriculum have helped to damage Negro students' self-concept. Thus, teachers should reject curriculum materials that may have a damaging influence on self-concept. Developing a greater understanding of Negro students will help teachers know which materials to reject.

This means that some good materials will be rejected--materials that are so rich in intellectual value that their richness seems to overshadow any negative influences they may have on the self-concept of Negro students (i.e., Huckleberry Finn). Rejecting rich material is unfortunate; but until many Negro students develop stronger positive self-concepts and security, it is best to reject even these. Specifically, until Negro students can look at one Negro without suspecting that the negative qualities that one Negro possesses are assigned to every Negro by the dominant culture, and until the dominant culture can look at one Negro without generalizing the negative qualities to all Negroes, Negro students should be insulated against negative portrayals of Negroes in curriculum materials.

Just being a Negro makes a child vulnerable to a negative self-concept because of the peculiar status of Negroes in America--and the treatment accorded to Negroes because of their status. Negro children learn very early--perhaps as early as three years old--that they are Negroes. They learn, also, at an early age that they are at a disadvantage in our society simply because they are Negroes and their skin is black.

Black skin can restrict residential choice, vocational opportunity, social advancement, acceptance by others, and it negatively affects self-concept. It was stated above that whenever the Negro problem is discussed, the blackness of the Negro's skin has to be dealt with. Perhaps skin color seems irrelevant to the teaching-learning situation--it isn't, when its relationship

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[1]Erik H. Erickson, "The Concept of Identity in Race Relations: Notes and Queries," Daedalus: The Negro American--2, Vol. 95, No. 1 (Winter, 1965), p. 155.

to self-concept is recognized, and it certainly isn't when the teacher is white and the student is black (this will be discussed under "Human Relations" in a later unit).

The Greeks originated the term stigma to refer to bodily signs designed to expose something unusual and bad about the signifier. In other words, visible body signs that cause an individual's physical appearance to differ from the "normal" population also cause the marked individual to take on qualities unrelated to the mark. The "normal" population tends to impute a wide range of imperfections on the basis of the mark. The "normals" react negatively because of the irrational conclusions reached on the basis of the irrelevant fact of physical difference. The stigma of black skin has made Negroes easy targets for persecution and discrimination. The stigma of black skin has become a symbol for all the troubles of Negroes. Negroes have tended to believe that black skin, in itself, is bad. There are many ethnic "in" jokes referring negatively to or ridiculing black skin. Often, Negro mothers of newborn babies are more concerned about "what color is the baby?" than the lack of physical deformity. Also, it is interesting and revealing that Negroes divide hair into "bad" and "good" categories: bad hair is "Negro" hair and good hair is hair that has the qualities of "caucasian" hair. Thus, the two most visible physical marks that identify Negroes are looked upon as "bad" both by Negroes and "normals." This kind of attitude about one's physical appearance can only be damaging to self-concept.

Individuals who are stigmatized attempt to hide, or "correct," what society sees as their failing. Negroes have attempted to "correct" their black skin by lightening it, and their kinky hair by straightening it. Significantly more advertising space in Negro publications is given to products that attempt to correct the stigma of black skin or kinky hair than any other products. These ads continue to reinforce the negative attitudes of black skin and kinky hair by telling the Negro that these are "bad" so that Negroes will buy the products. The great amount of space given to "stigma-correcting" products reflects the intense desire of Negroes to remove the stigma. Also, the many slang words and phrases Negroes have to refer to the stigma of black skin and kinky hair is revealing. Finally, the popularity of hats among Negroes is probably due to their desire to hide their stigma of "bad" hair.

The color black in our culture is always associated with things that are "bad." In other words, the color black carries a value judgment that is negative. For example, black is the color of mourning; a "black night" is a forbidding night; a "black moment" is a time of trouble; a "black heart" is an evil heart; the villain in movies and television traditionally wears black; there are many more examples that illustrate the color black as used to convey something bad. Thus, Negroes are taught by a kind of stimulus generalization that their skin color is bad, and the way they are often treated reinforces this. It is difficult for them to develop a positive self-concept when they are constantly reminded that their color is, in itself, bad.

Suggestions for helping culturally disadvantaged students develop a positive self-concept were given in Unit Two. These apply, also, to Negro students--especially the suggestion of pointing out to Negro students other Negroes who have "made it." The suggestion to help Negro students improve their

self-concept that is given most often and loudest is that the schools need to teach "Negro history." The advocates of Negro history have not clearly defined what Negro history is, or explained how it would be included in the curriculum. They have vaguely defined Negro history as "the part Negroes have played in the development of our country." Negroes have made many great contributions, and these contributions should be presented in the curriculum fully and accurately, without sentimentality or condescension. But the contributions of Negroes were not made in a vacuum: they are an integral part of the whole development. Therefore, it is inconceivable that the contribution of Negroes should be treated as something distinct and separate from the total effort to build a great nation. Furthermore, even if Negro history can be thought of and treated as a separate subject the question is whether it should be included in the curriculum as a part of the regular courses in United States history or should be a separate course. The lower the grade level, the more difficult it will be to establish a separate course in Negro history.

Admittedly, the role of Negroes in our country's history has often been underplayed or ignored in the curriculum and textbooks. The reality of segregation in life has resulted, regrettably, in the omission of the role of Negroes. Negro students are keenly aware of this omission. However, to define the role of Negroes separately and distinctly, and to establish separate courses in Negro history is really "curriculum jim crow." At a time when Negroes are struggling to achieve social integration, it seems odd for some people to be pressing for historical segregation.

Advocates of Negro history do have a point, though, and it is important to keep their point in focus: a knowledge of the contributions of Negroes to the development of our country will help to improve the self-concept of Negro students. Also, an accurate and complete history of our country must include these contributions. Separating their role in definition and in the curriculum, however, makes inaccurate and incomplete history, and it emphasizes the separation of Negroes. The role of Negroes must be taught within the whole framework of our country's development. In other words, the role of Negroes should be an integral part of courses in United States history, not a separate course. This approach is consistent with the goals of integration and the necessity for accuracy in history.

One of the topics that should be studied in history classes is the civil rights movement. This movement is a source of great pride for Negroes, especially since the 1963 march on Washington. The civil rights movement has given a boost to the self-concept of every Negro. Increasingly, Negroes are taking pride in being black and this new pride can be traced to the civil rights movement. The movement has given Negroes identity, and many Negroes are becoming increasingly nationalistic (i.e., "black power" advocates). Thus, many Negroes are accentuating their "Negritude" (characteristics of Negroes and their subculture): wearing their hair "natural" instead of straightening it; describing themselves as "black people" instead of "Negroes" or "colored people" (a few years ago, most Negroes would have been insulted if they were referred to as "black people"); recognizing their African roots (a few years ago, most Negroes emphasized how much "white" or "Indian blood" they had--now, many are emphasizing how much "Negro blood" they have); Negroes are taking increasing pride in their dialect, their food, their humor

that has grown out of their adversity (a whole new crop of comedians are probably the most articulate spokesmen and interpreters of the Negro subculture to the dominant culture); there are many examples of "Negritude." The point is, Negroes are not ashamed of being Negroes any more, and the loss of shame is due to their new identity and boosted self-concept gained from the civil rights movement. And this is ironic: a movement that has as its goal social integration has actually created pride in those things that have prevented Negroes from being integrated.

Thus, teaching Negro students "Negro history" or teaching about the civil rights movement may improve their self-concept but, at the same time, make them more nationalistic--and this will make integration more difficult.

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Throughout this section, the point has been made that the culturally disadvantaged Negro student is described by the content in Unit One and Two. The topics covered in Parts I and II of this unit should be placed in the general framework of the culturally disadvantaged student outlined in Units One and Two. The main purpose here is to give teachers greater and more detailed understanding of one particular group of culturally disadvantaged students.

PART III: THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

The role of the teacher in educating culturally disadvantaged Negro students is essentially the role of the teacher in educating all disadvantaged students, as stated in Unit One. That is, the teacher of disadvantaged students is: a link with the dominant culture; a model; and the initiator and evaluator of learning experiences. The special case of Negro students because of their situation in society, however, places greater emphasis on the first of these roles.

Classroom teachers are more than a link with the dominant culture for Negro students--teachers are a link with the white world. Negro students living in the ghettos have less contact with white people than any previous generation because of increased segregated living patterns. The contact with the white world is often indirect, and regrettably much of the contact is a result of the civil rights conflict as reported in the mass media. Unfortunately, these reports usually emphasize the negative sides of the conflict. Also, the contact with the white world for many culturally disadvantaged Negro students is made in other unpleasant ways such as with the police or exploiting merchants. Thus, Negro students often make the generalization that the entire white population of society is against them.

One of the special roles of the teachers of culturally disadvantaged Negro students is to serve as a positive link with the white world. This requires classroom teachers to communicate the concern the vast majority of white people have for the plight of culturally disadvantaged Negro students. Specifically, the job of the white teacher is to convince Negro students that the sensational actions of bigotry reported in the press, and the unfortunate encounters with white persons who display bigoted actions actually do not represent the feelings and actions of the majority. This will be a difficult task. The minority of bigots have given frequent and potent reinforcement to the attitude of many Negro students that the entire white population is against them. Classroom teachers can counter these actions most effectively by doing a sincere job and pointing out examples of cooperation between Negro and white people.

Another special role of teachers who work with disadvantaged Negro students is to raise their aspiration level. Negro students have often had the attitude that opportunities for them didn't exist. Unfortunately, they have been correct. Recently, however, more and more opportunities have become available for Negroes. Thurgood Marshall, a Negro and the solicitor general of the Justice Department stated in a recent speech that it is impossible for a qualified Negro to be without a job. This message must be communicated to Negro students by classroom teachers. They must be shown that opportunities that may not have existed just a few years ago are now open to qualified Negroes. Every month Ebony magazine publishes pictures with accompanying short explanations of Negroes occupying positions that

were not available to Negroes a short time ago. These examples can be given to Negro students every month to help them realize that greater opportunities do exist. Another way Negro students can become aware of greater opportunities is to take them on field trips to industry. Many school systems have initiated programs with the new federal funds that incorporate field trips and other kinds of cooperation with industry. For Negro students, seeing another Negro performing a job is the most convincing evidence that opportunities do exist.

Greater opportunities do exist and culturally disadvantaged Negro students must be educated to take advantage of them.

Often the question of what kind of education disadvantaged Negroes should receive is asked as if the educational goals of this disadvantaged group (or any disadvantaged group) must be different. The answer to this question is: the goals of education for disadvantaged Negroes must be the same as the goals of education for everyone else. Their deprivation does not determine different goals; their deprivation does determine different methods, approaches, materials, and increased efforts and concern for reaching educational goals. Specifically, vocational education for Negroes has been the answer to the question of what kind of education Negroes should receive. Vocational education could solve many of the immediate economic needs of Negroes. But stressing vocational education for Negroes will not solve the long-range needs of American society. In the first place, vocational education would still make the white man's floor the Negro's ceiling and this is part of the problem now; in the second place, our democratic principles do not allow us to educate one group of people to fill particular occupational roles in our society.

The first strong advocate of vocational education was the Negro leader, Booker T. Washington. His views on vocational education, expressed over half a century ago, are still the arguments given by contemporary advocates of vocational education for Negroes. The Job Corps program and vocational program for Negroes recommended by James B. Conant in his book Slums and Suburbs are examples of the "Washington solution" to the Negro problem. This approach is only one of many approaches that must be taken. The argument for vocational education is based only on the condition of Negroes in our society, and it ignores the goals of American education. That is, since Negroes, as a group, are on the bottom of society, the bottom of the educational hierarchy is all they can attain. Booker T. Washington wanted to train Negroes to be blacksmiths, bricklayers, carpenters, and tailors; today, the advocates of vocational education want to train Negroes to be welders, drill press operators, repairmen, and janitors. A contrast of these aims reveals years of inaction.

If vocational education is overemphasized, the aspiration level of Negroes will remain low. Also, the absence of Negro models who have successfully attained the full range of educational goals will discourage intellectual effort of Negro students. Classroom teachers must encourage Negro students to stretch beyond the limited goals of vocational education or our society risks the stagnation of 22 million human beings. Negro students won't do much stretching unless they see others like themselves who have successfully completed the stretch beyond mere vocational educational goals.

The reality of our society, which places so much importance on group identity instead of human identity, causes minority individuals to recognize their potential in others who match them in color and ethnic background. Finally, every individual--regardless of color or deprivation--has the right to develop to his full potential, and vocational education alone does not afford this opportunity.

Cultural deprivation, however, restricts the potential of individuals and prescribes educational goals. Perhaps vocational education is realistic education for persons handicapped by cultural deprivation. If so, then educators should only begrudgingly and temporarily accommodate deprivation.

SUMMARY OF MAIN POINTS

1. The social and economic status of Negroes is a major domestic problem.
2. The problem of educating culturally disadvantaged Negro students is acute in the cities.
3. Slavery is the root of the Negro problem; discrimination has perpetuated the problem.
4. Segregation has caused Negroes to develop a subculture.
5. The structural and economic problems of many Negro families is serious.
6. Culturally disadvantaged Negro boys often lack good models in their subculture.
7. Ghetto life seals off Negro students from the dominant culture.
8. The self-concept of Negroes is damaged by the relative status of Negroes in our society and the value judgment our society places on the color black.
9. Special functions of classroom teachers who work with culturally disadvantaged Negro students are to act as a link with the white world, and to make Negro students aware of increasing opportunities.
10. Vocational education should not be emphasized for Negro students.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Is education the best hope of Negroes to improve their economic and social status?

2. Discuss some of the dangers to our society if its Negro population continues to be disproportionately disadvantaged.

3. Discuss the importance of changing prejudiced attitudes of the dominant culture. What part can the schools play in this kind of education?

4. In addition to the efforts now being made by the federal government to improve the status of Negroes, what other efforts need to be made?

5. Is slavery really the root of the Negro problem? Or are there equally important roots that have not been discussed in this unit?

6. Discuss the points made in this unit that slavery and discrimination should be dealt with objectively and completely with Negro students.

7. Should education prepare Negro students to face life <u>as Negroes</u> in our society, or should education prepare them to face life as American citizens? In other words, should education ignore the reality of discrimination and prejudice that Negro students must face?

8. Suggest other ways culturally disadvantaged Negro students can be taught the value of the American family structure.

9. Discuss the following question: Should Negro history be taught in schools as a separate class?

10. Discuss the following question: Should Negro students receive a "special" education that emphasizes vocational skills?

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